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DEPARTMENT OF RED CROSS NURSING

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THE SCHOOLS OF NURSING IN THE OLD WORLD

II. WARSAW

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THE first class in the Warsaw School of Nursing was admitted October 19, 1921, with a registration of 26 students, (the number was subsequently reduced to 22). For the formal opening of the school it was of course necessary to have the house blessed, following the Polish custom. It was very much of an occasion and all the leading citizens and best families of Warsaw attended, the Cardinal of Warsaw himself officiating.

The students were altogether charming and attracted much attention. Each played to perfection the role of hostess in receiving the visitors. Miss Bridge writes:

The night before we had discussed the part they were to play and suggested that each student wear a distinguishing mark—perhaps an arm band. "Indeed, I won't need any arm band!" exclaimed one pupil ardently. "I shall be so interested and so enthusiastic that the visitors will know I am a student." And this proved to be the case, the visitors picking them out at once. As the students conducted the guests through the house one of the latter was heard to comment on the comfort and attractiveness of the school, ending with "The students surely should be very happy here." "Indeed we are!" was the response. "The only sad thing about it all is that we must leave it after two short years."

One of the physicians was much impressed by the beds in the students' rooms and expressed the thought that the students couldn't have made them themselves. Instantly the student showing him about proceeded to take her bed apart and demonstrate beyond dispute that she could do it quickly and neatly. "It didn't take me two weeks to learn, either!" she finished triumphantly. "I learned in just two days!"

"We have lived through the happiest and most important day of our lives," one of the students announced at dinner that night, "and we wish the American Red Cross Nursing Service to know how much we appreciate the work and thought which has been put into the preparation for our reception and the initiation of the School." When the translation of Miss Noyes' message of greeting was read, together with one from the American nurse whose beneficence had made possible the early establishment of the school they responded by drawing up the following expression of gratitude, addressed to the Director of the American Red Cross Nursing Service at National Headquarters:

"Dear Lady: Moved by a deep sentiment for you who, on the day of the christening of our school sent us such cordial wishes, we all of us wish to express our sincere thanks.

"In very deed we Poles who, not long ago could only pity ourselves for the low level of the nursing work in our country, now see our hopes being realized.

"We, the twenty-four students of the School of Nursing, consider it an honor that we have been accepted in this School and we are happy that we are those to whom the opportunity has been given to help with our work in establishing real nursing in Poland.

"We understand quite well that our good will would, without any doubt, have had no result if the hands of our sisters had not been cordially stretched across the sea toward us. Our sisters who, assiduously occupied with the fate of our nursing, have engendered in our hearts the desire for work by giving us splendid instruction and the suitable conditions for this instruction.

"We are already acquainted with the spirit of the School and with the method of its management and we are sure that in the friendly atmosphere the assigned two years will pass quickly and that we shall leave the School endowed with a great supply of knowledge and qualities of character which are essential for each person who wishes to devote herself to the work of nursing.

"Hoping that before the end of the course you will be able to visit us, we send you once again our thanks for your encouraging words."

One of the happy incidents of the day of the opening was the receipt of a gracefully written message and flowers from the National Organization of Polish Women. This is one of the strongest and most important of the native organizations and augurs well for the success and permanency of the school. The happy auspices under which the School was dedicated have continued, the interest and whole-hearted devotion of the students being a constant source of satisfaction to the nurses who are in charge.

Miss Bridge declares:

The students are so responsive to instruction that within two weeks they were all sleeping with their windows open and they even eat oatmeal for breakfast instead of masses of bread.

Walking home from a Bacteriology class one day a discussion on the conditions obtaining in Polish hospitals was overheard. "With conditions so bad what can we do to change them?" one of the students asked. The other was ready with the solution. "Well," she declared, "we certainly can do something even with the little we have studied. We can at least keep our patients clean and that is more than has been done in our hospitals."

Their courage and ambition set no bounds upon their future accomplishments. Miss Bridge relates how one day when they were studying the development of nursing in America, mention was made of the *American Journal of Nursing*. Immediately suggestions were made as to the publication of a similar mouthpiece for their profession in Poland. They even went so far as to choose the first editor, a very clever young woman who at present makes all the speeches for the group and writes all the official letters. It is not difficult to imagine her as initiating such a literary undertaking.

In the early part of January Helen Scott Hay, Director of the

A. R. C. Nursing Service in Europe, made a tour of inspection through Poland. In the highest terms she speaks of the results already attained at the Warsaw School.

If only you could step into the Nurses' School at Warsaw now and get the total impression as I have done concerning Miss Bridge's accomplishment thus far, and the prospect for the future! The Warsaw School is in every respect a model of its kind, comparing most favorably with any institution in the United States.

In all my experience I have never seen such neatness and order in the pupils' rooms nor greater enthusiasm and interest in the development of their work. * * * I attended a meeting with Miss Bridge of the Hospital Committee. I was amazed beyond words at the understanding and appreciation exhibited by the Polish doctors present. There was a spirit of understanding and fair play that was as promising as anything I have ever seen in any of these foreign countries. Dr. Meczowski, who has long been ill, presided at this meeting and was forced several times to pause and rest a moment. Sad to say his death occurred only two days later,—a sad loss to the school and to Miss Bridge, for his help has been inestimable.

On February 22, 1922, an agreement was signed between the Chief of the Hospital at Smolna, Dr. Dobrowolski, and Miss Bridge, whereby the nursing, housekeeping and kitchen in the hospital were to be taken over by the Warsaw School on February 27th, 1922.

The task that confronted Miss Bridge was not only overwhelmingly difficult because of conditions occasioned by neglect, due to absence of professional supervision and proper equipment, but was also, because of the size of the hospital, of mammoth proportions. A less optimistic soul would have been disheartened. Writing of this experience, Miss Bridge says:

My balance and courage are restored, however, as I look at the bright, eager faces of the students. I am sure they will be a great comfort and aid in helping us through the extremely difficult period we are facing.

That these expectations were realized is borne out by her report written the day after the students had been introduced to the hospital:

Suffice it to say we discovered many things during our first day's work, but the reaction of the students is not only extremely interesting but also very satisfactory. The Chief of the Hospital and the physicians seem eager to have us come. And I hope we shall be able to demonstrate to them that we are really valuable.

THE DEDICATION OF THE BORDEAUX SCHOOL BUILDING

A SPECIAL invitation has been received by Miss Noyes from M. Henri Cruse, president of the Board of the Hospital connected with the Florence Nightingale School at Bordeaux, requesting her presence at the dedication of the American Nurses' Memorial. Miss Noyes is also asked to extend this invitation to "any one who might be interested in the ceremony and who would be able to come to Bor-

deaux for this purpose." Dr. Anna Hamilton, superintendent of the School of Nursing, has also cabled to Miss Noyes: "Opening school fixed May 12th. Please come. Extend invitation to nurses interested."

The memorial represents the gift of more than \$50,000 subscribed by the nurses of America through a joint committee of members of the three National Nursing Organizations and consists of a thoroughly up-to-date and well equipped building in which to house the Florence Nightingale School. President Cruse appreciatively describes this imposing bequest, in his letter of invitation, in the following words: "This beautiful home will help to attract many more girls towards nursing and will be a great comfort to those who are devoting their lives to the care of the sick. The date of the dedication has been set as May 12th in honor of the 102d anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale."

Writing in *La Femme*, the organ of the French women's Christian social institutions, a contributor pays the following enthusiastic tribute to the American nurses who participated in the memorial:

The three great American Nurses' Associations have decided to erect to the memory of their sisters who died in Europe a monument commemorating in a striking and useful way the sacrifice of those 281 of their sisters who died, the victims of bombardment, torpedoing and epidemics, in the World War. They organized a subscription in their countless hospital schools and offered the proceeds, 800,000 francs, to Dr. Anna Hamilton for the construction of the new Florence Nightingale School, which thus makes France the guardian of the monument of their dead as well as the guardian of their principles of nursing. Our American sisters understand that death begets life; that the sacrifice of some may be useful to others. What a teaching to France, on whose soil so very many monuments have been erected which, while they glorify the artists who conceived them, in no way transform the death and sacrifice of our soldiers into fruitful labor and progress! * * * Perhaps in the very near future hospital schools of this kind will multiply in France. French women will understand as those of so many other countries already have done that the principles of Florence Nightingale, excluding all amateurism, all dilettante nurses, requires of the nurse her faculties and entire life, as any other decent profession requires the giving of the whole personality.

The intelligent and generous act of the American women shows us how to go on, how to have faith in the future of France, how to use one's heart and mind for the good of others, and how in memory of the dead to heal the living who suffer.

SUMMER COURSE AT SEATTLE

The University of Washington, at Seattle, is offering a course in Training School Administration, to be conducted by Annie W. Goodrich, who has for years lectured at Teachers College, New York, on this subject. The course will be given between June 21 and July 26.